(b) whether Government propose to engage these aged persons in some employment?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) A new scheme for setting up of Old Age Homes for destitute and poor aged persons is under formulation in consultation with the Planning Commission. The scheme will be implemented through voluntary organisations.

(b) No, Sir.

Development of Tribals

3515. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a fact finding and need assessment survey of tribals in India was conducted by the Ministry; and

(b) if so, the details of socio-economic measures undertaken as a follow-up measure for the development of the tribals in India?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) and (b) The Ministry has sponsored various fact finding studies/surveys through Governmental and non-Governmental Research Organisations. These studies relate to evaluation of programmes, impact on socio-economic condition, etc. Based on these findings, family benefit schemes under agriculture, horticulture small and village industries, etc.. are implemented in the tribal areas according to the needs of the people. For educational development, residential schools, boys hostels and girls hostels are constructed with special emphasis to increase the literacy level among the Scheduled Tribe population. Low literacy pockets have been identified especially where tribal women literacy is less than 2 percent and accordingly scheme is being formulated to promote education among tribal women. Programmes under health, communication drinking water supply, rural roads under Minimum Needs Programme are implemented in the critical areas where tribals need special attention for their socio-economic development.

Drug abuse problem in youth

3516. SHRI VENOD SHARMA: SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the dimension of the drug abuse problem in the country;

(b) what are the reasons for growing drug abuse problem in youth today;

(c) what are the details of specific steps taken by Government to prevent drug abuse;

(d) the role of SAARC countries in controlling drug menace; and

(e) the programmes/schemes formulated by SAARC countries in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) Ad hoc studies conducted in 31 cities and two border areas indicate that youth between the age of 15—30 are most vulnerable to drug abuse, the studies also indicated that there was no religious, cultural or socio-economic groups unaffected by the problem.

(b) Poor group pressure and curiosity are the most important reasons leading to drug abuse.

(c) The Government has launched a programme of awareness generation to warn the youth about the ill-effects of drug abuse and alcoholism. In addition, voluntary organisations are funded for setting up and running of counselling, de-addiction and after care centres for treatment and rehabilitation of those addicted.

(d) The SAARC countries have all expressed concern over the drug menace in the region and a conven-